

FIGHTERS FOR FREEDOM OF ISRAEL

D A I L Y   P R E S S   B U L L E T I N

No. 34

Tel-Aviv, 31st August, 1948

1) TWO MEETINGS.

("Mivrak", 31.8.48.)

One meeting was that of the Zionist General Council. We could start about it in a grandiloquent manner: "Momentous decisions are expected by the public..." But even the most grandiloquent among newspapermen will not put it this way. It is only too well known that the public neither expects anything from nor has any interest in the debates and decisions of the Zionist Council. The nation, the real nation that is now manning positions, has risen far above the old, moss-covered parties. The nation wants action and will follow those who perform great acts. The Council could, for instance, have won all hearts just by making a simple declaration that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Such declaration would have been accepted with universal acclaim and the nation would have realized what the Council stood for and for what purpose it assembled. But since no political act of historic significance, nor any act of any significance was performed by the Council, that devoted its undivided attention to the party squabble over chairs (the number of which so miraculously multiplied of late), a large majority of the public paid little attention to the Council and nobody, with the sole exception of professional party politicians, took any interest in the proceedings.

A much livelier interest could be observed last night in the streets in connection with another meeting, that was taking place at the same hours. That of the Security Council. Momentous decisions were expected from that quarter by many, especially by naive people. Numerous simpletons admired the cleverness exhibited by the Chairman, Mr. Malik, in utilizing the last days of his chairmanship in order to create 'faits accomplis'. At least that was the way it was splashed in big letters across the front page of one well-meaning evening paper. Had not Mr. Shertok

REGISTRY COPY

- 2 -

sent a letter to the Security Council in which he asked a clear, pertinent, important and decisive question, on the reply to which so much depended?

We have called these optimists "simpletons" for the reason that they have already forgotten the fate of a previous, much cleverer and firmer letter. We refer to that famous letter in which Mr. Shertok asked for the date of termination of the truce to be fixed.

On that occasion we wrote that the letter was an empty gesture so long as we did not give the Security Council time limit within which to impose peace, failing which we would take the matter into our hands.

Since the letter was not drafted in above terms, the only effect it produced was a shower of compliments that descended on the heads of Mr. Shertok and other Mapai leaders as a due tribute to their firmness and daring. One can almost feel the election time atmosphere...

Since the first "ultimatum" had been left without response, there was no sense in sending another letter. Although the second letter was more modest in its demands and less insistent in its phrasing, it likewise failed to draw a reply. Even the chairmanship of obliging Mr. Malik did not help. There was not even a heated debate around it. There was just - nothing.

The agenda of the Security Council is dictated by two powers - U.S.A. and Britain. They decide the order (or disorder as the case may be) of the day. What they want now is the continuation of the truce, which is the best way to bring about the economic breakdown of the State of Israel and the collapse of its army's morale. The two meetings that took place last night at about the same time did nothing either to break the plot or to prevent the disaster. Mr. Malik failed to do anything to prevent it, but how could he be expected to succeed, when Zionist leaders, engrossed by their squabble over chairs, never attempted to tackle the problem.

Though both meetings failed to defeat the scheme, somebody else could have done it. During the same evening hours many were eagerly waiting for new developments on the southern sector of the Jerusalem Front. A tragi-comic spectacle is being enacted there. Jews are insistently begging for the Red Cross flag to be flown over the very place where, under its protection, heads of Jewish soldiers were hacked off - probably for more heads, or something more important than mere soldiers' heads, to be cut off. Whole suburbs, perhaps.

- 3 -

But the miracle we have witnessed so many times is happening again: the enemy is adamant.

However one should not rely too much on miracles. The Egyptians may yet change their mind with the result that the area in question will be demilitarized and occupied by enemy overnight. Then Mr. Shertok will have another opportunity to send letters to the Security Council or to the Truce Observation Commission.

The situation south of Jerusalem could be turned to our advantage. The continual shelling, the refusal to evacuate the Government House, to withdraw from the Mount Zion and Deir Abu Tor positions, all these could be turned to our advantage. The enemy conspiracy in the Security Council could be broken and all the suffering of the war ended with a single stroke.

What are we waiting for? What are we afraid of?

The Security Council just the same made no decision. Gen. Lundstroem just the same is accusing us violating the truce.

What are we waiting for?

For the Zionist Congress next summer perhaps?...

2)) LUCKY ABDULLAH.

(Broadcast 31.8.48.)

Abdullah has been lucky again. In the report containing 42 instances of truce violation, presented by the Government of Israel, his Arab Legion is blamed only for 4. Apparently the scores of Jews killed and wounded on Mount Zion, in Deir Abu Tor, Yemin Moshe fell during just these four instances of violation. In fairness to the Arab Legion one should speak only of one instance of truce violation. That violation started the moment the truce came into force and ~~and~~ its end is as yet shrouded in dim future. For what with the incessant sniping and shelling, it is extremely hard to tell when one violation ceases and another begins.

Nevertheless the Government of Israel deems it necessary to submit a detailed report made out in a manner suggesting that the relations between us and the Arab Legion are almost idyllic. For what are a few scores of killed and wounded and a couple of be-headed corpses between them and us?

The firmness displayed by our Government in connection with the Agricultural Training Farm teaches its own lesson in this connection. The enemy involved in the bargaining over that area is Egyptian. The Government's stand is far from firm in the two points where the Arab Legion forces entrenched themselves: in Deir Abut Tor and on Mount Zion. Both points are of vital importance. The occupation of both had forced Arabs behind the Old City walls and only the gods of folly and truce know why they were allowed to gain foothold there after the beginning of the truce and why they have been permitted to dig trenches and build fortifications at a distance of mere 10-15 metres from lines occupied by Israeli troops.

When in addition to these facts "The Times" begins to advocate direct Jewish-Arab negotiations as the best way towards solution and the article appears shortly after the return of that honourable Conservative M.P. who had 2 weeks ago some secret talks at Amman and Hakiyya, it is not difficult to guess that the rich dish called "Ben-Gurion - Abdullah Alliance" has been done to a turn and is about to be served on our table. It is quite possible that preparations for a "Sulha" are already under way. The sacrificial sheep is ready. It is that numerous herd of Jewish soldiers that fell in order to save Abdullah's tottering throne. It is the Jewish blood shed in the Old City, which will be presented to Abdullah with a couple of suburbs thrown in. It is the Jewish blood that will be shed to-morrow because of the Government's unwillingness to act in defiance of British wishes by attacking Abdullah's forces and putting once for all an end to his false rule over our land, both sides of Jordan.

2)) ARMS SHIP.

(Broadcast 31.8.48.)

Panama's Consul in Marseille warned the Truce Observation Commission about an arms ship that had sailed to Eretz-Israel. The warning makes no hint whether the ship is bound for Israel or Arabs. However, the alacrity with which the Commission sprang to action leaves no room for doubt; their navy is already out in search for the ship. Therefore (if Panamanian Consul's report is true at all) the ship must be destined for Israel, otherwise Gen. Lundstroem's navy would not be in such a hurry. We have never heard of it hurrying towards the Akaba Bay when, due to a rift between Abdullah and Egypt, it was disclosed that a British ship with arms was sailing in that direction.

- 5 -

As a rule, one never hears of any Observers' activity outside the only state that suffers their presence and permits them to operate - Israel. It may be also assumed that the shooting of the two French Observers has not tended to tighten the Observation Commission's control over Arab held territories. Nor have we ever heard about the Egyptian regular forces deciding to stamp out the provocateurs, the stabbers in the back, the irregulars who killed the two Frenchmen. There is no indication of any enquiry or legal prosecution in that connection. Apparently the relations between the regular and irregular forces are quite... regular.

The Observers that set forth to capture the arms ship must be fairly sure that it is not destined for Arabs, so that there is no danger of fire from the Arab irregulars on board the ship. Some information also must have reached the Observers that the ship does not belong to Jewish irregulars either. Were it so, there would be no need for the Truce Commission to budge. The matter would be then dealt with by somebody else, in a most satisfactory manner, with the application of gunfire.

The whole affair is, for the time being, a mere rumour. We would not mind if it remained so. We would not mind if some day the Panamanian Consul disclosed that he had made two mistakes: that the ship was sailing not ~~xxxx~~ to but from Israel and that instead of carrying arms it had an empty hold.

However, if the alarm does not prove false and U. N. Observers succeed in capturing the ship, we would then prefer to see the flag of Israel flying proudly from its mast and both, the ship and the state, sailing openly and courageously, without veering or tacking, towards their only destination.